

Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 AID-20 OMB-01 NIC-01 CU-04 PC-04 RSR-01

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O R 141720Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBAYYS BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2826

DIA DOD WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO USCINCSO

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 5033

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJ: GENERAL PERON ADDRESSES NATION

1. SUMMARY: IN NATIONALLY TELEVISED SPEECH PERON RECOUNTED HIS RESISTANCE OVER A PERIOD OF MONTHS TO URGINGS THAT HE BECOME PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE BY WHATEVER MEANS, CONSTITUTIONAL OR NOT. HE CLAIMED THAT FROM THE MOMENT OF RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTING THE JUSTICIALISTA PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION CAMPORA HAD COMMITTED HIMSELF, IF ELECTED, TO RESIGN AND ALLOW THE PEOPLE TO ELECT THEIR CHOSEN CANDIDATE FREE FROM THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS IMPOSED ON THE MARCH 11 ELECTIONS. PERON DENIED PERSONAL AMBITION, BUT PLEDGED HIMSELF TO SERVE THE NATION IN ANY WAY DEMANDED OF HIM AND AT ANY COST OF PERSONAL SACRIFICE. END SUMMARY. NO ACTION REQUIRED.

2. SPEAKING AS CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL JUSTICIALIST MOVEMENT,
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PERON TOLD OF CAMPORA'S ATTEMPTS TO PERSUADE HIM TO "ACCEPT

THE PRESIDENCY" BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER HIS RETURN TO ARGENTINA IN NOVEMBER 1972 AND OF THE DAMAND DURING HIS VISIT ON THE PART OF THE WORKING CLASS, THE JUSTICIALISTA MOVEMENT, YOUTH, AND A LARGE PART OF THE PEOPLE FOR HIM "TO ACCEPT THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY...IMPOSED BY ANY NECESSARY MEANS." IN PARAGUAY FOLLOWING HIS NOVEMBER VISIT TO ARGENTINA AND STILL BEING IMPORTUNED BY CAMPORA, HE EXPLAINED, "I DEFINITELY RENOUNCED ACCEPTING ANY CANDIDACY IMPOSED ILLEGALLY OR UNCONSTITUTIONALLY". PERON UNEQUIVOCALLY STATED HIS PRESENT COMMITMENT TO CONSTITUTIONALITY, "FREEDOM IS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH SLAVERY TO A CONSTITUTION."

3. PERON REVEALED THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS OWN DEFINITE DECISION AGAINST ACCEPTING NOMINATION, CAMPORA DID ACCEPT THE MOVEMENT'S NOMINATION, EXPLAINING TO PERON THAT IF ELECTED HE PLANNED TO DENOUNCE THE INCONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE PROSCRIPTION OF CANDIDATES AND RESIGN, AS HE HAS NOW DONE, TO ALLOW THE PEOPLE TO GENUINELY ELECT THEIR DESIRED CANDIDATE.

4. "AT THIS POINT IN MY LIFE", PERON CONCLUDED, "I HAVE NO ASPIRATION OTHER THAN TO BE USEFUL TO MY COUNTRY...WHICH IS A TREMENDOUS SACRIFICE BECAUSE THE YEARS TAKE THEIR TOLL." "I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE PEOPLE WILL DECIDE, I DON'T CARE, BUT WHATEVER IS DECIDED, IF GOD GIVES ME HEALTH, I WILL CONTINUE TO BE A SOLDIER IN THE SERVICE OF THE REPUBLIC."

5. PERON FULSOMELY PRAISED THE PERSONAL GENEROSITY AND INSPIRATIONAL PATRIOTISM OF CAMPORA AND LIMA AND SAID THEIR 45 DAYS OF GOVERNING WERE "NORMAL", "NATURAL", AND "EXCELLENT". HE ADMITTED THAT ARGENTINA IS TODAY "SLIGHTLY DEBILITATED, DISORGANIZED AND SAD" BUT THAT THE CONFIDENCE SHOWN IN HIM COULD HELP ARGENTINA TO ONCE AGAIN CONFIDENTLY RAISE HER HEAD BEFORE OTHER NATIONS.

6. COMMENT: PERON LOOKED TIRED AND DRAWN. HIS VOICE WAS SOMEWHAT HOARSE AND HE OCCASIONALLY COUGHED. HE APOLOGIZED, EXPLAINING THAT HE WAS NOT FULLY RECOVERED FROM HIS RECENT ILLNESS.

7. APPEARING AT PERON'S SIDE WERE PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT LASTIRI AND MRS LASTIRI, ALONG WITH ISABEL PERON. MEMBERS OF THE CABINET STOOD IN THE BACKGROUND.

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8. PERON REFERRED ONLY INDIRECTLY TO ELECTIONS, YET REPEATEDLY IMPLIED THAT HE WOULD BE A CANDIDATE AND WOULD ACCEPT THE PRESIDENCY, BUT ONLY BY CONSTITUTIONAL MEANS. THE CONSTANT THEME OF CONSTITUTIONALITY IN THE SPEECHES OF ALL MAJOR FIGURES IN THE LAST 24 HOURS HAS PROBABLY QUIETED THE FEARS OF THE MILITARY THAT PERON MIGHT ACHIEVE THE PRESIDENCY IN ANOTHER MANNER.

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